

Prevailing Faith - Pt 5

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I. Recap

A. Last week we talked about overcoming barriers to faith.

B. We found that Jesus addresses offenses in two primary categories: unforgiveness & entitlement

C. The antidote to these is Gratitude

D. This week we are going to look at the key parable that Jesus gave on persevering faith in prayer in Luke 18:1-8.

II. Theological Keys

A. This section forms an inclusion from Luke 17:5-18:8.

- An inclusion is a topic that is introduced and then mentioned again later in the text, with the teaching on that topic in between.
- The descriptive use of the word faith in Luke 17:5 & 18:8 forms an inclusion, signaling that everything in between is a discussion on faith—specifically how faith is expressed and sustained.

B. This parable is a contrast instead of it being a similarity. All the characters except for the adversary are to be understood as the opposite of what we read in the parable. They function as a contrast rather than a direct analogy.

- God is not an unjust judge; His throne is established on righteousness and justice.
- We are not a vulnerable widow; we are the bride of Christ, fully

loved and cared for.

III. Parable verse by verse

Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, 2 saying: 'There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man.' 3 Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.' 4 And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, 5 yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.' 6 Then the Lord said, 'Hear what the unjust judge said. 7 And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them? 8 I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?'

—Luke 18:1-8

A. "Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart" Luke 18:1

- The key point of the parable is to cultivate courage in the heart of God's people to persevere in prayer and never quit
- If our understanding of this parable doesn't create this zeal and confidence, then we need the Holy Spirit to give us revelation of what Jesus was actually teaching so we may have faith to persevere.

B. "saying: 'There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man.'" Luke 18:2

- This judge is unlike God.
- He was irreverent and uncaring. He didn't care about justice and He didn't care about people

C. "Now there was a widow in that city; and she came to him, saying, 'Get justice for me from my adversary.'" Luke 18:3

- This widow was being tormented by an adversary. The adversary is doing something unjust to her. He is harming her or abusing her in some way.
- The fact that she is representing herself to the judge is an indicator that she has no covenantal covering or advocate, no children who are of age who can speak for her. She has no one to fight for her.
- You and I are not like this widow. We are the bride of Christ, loved and adored by Jesus our bridegroom.

D. "And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, 'Though I do not fear God nor regard man, 5 yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.'" Luke 18:4-5

- Even an unjust judge who doesn't care about people is prevailed upon by perseverance.
- Perseverance is powerful and is our door to prevailing.

E. "Then the Lord said, 'Hear what the unjust judge said. 7 And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to Him, though He bears long with them?'" Luke 18:7

- This is better rendered, "Even he (the unjust judge) rendered a just decision in the end. So don't you think God will surely give justice to His chosen people who cry out to Him day and night? Will He keep putting them off?"
- The point is that God will release justice when His people cry out night and day. He won't keep putting us off. Verse 8 explains that when God does release justice it will happen suddenly.
- Notice the phrase night and day. This is intentional and echoes the priestly service of the Old Testament, where priests ministered to God continually.

- The whole idea is that the Lord set a framework for the people of God to cry out for justice against the enemy, to do so night and day and to never quit. For in doing so we are guaranteed that we will see God make the wrong things right, we will see justice released in the earth.

F. "I tell you that He will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"

- This is a window into the heart of Jesus. He is asking a rhetorical question that expresses His desire.
- He is looking for a people who will not quit in prayer. He is looking for a people who will persevere, night and day.
- He wants there to be people living this way in the generation in which He returns.
- It is our great honor at GateCity to host a prayer room that is ceaseless in adoration and intercession. We want to meet Jesus longing by continuing to persevere in prayer.
- He equates persevering in prayer to having faith. That's a key to the whole parable. We are to stay the course in prayer and this is an expression of faith. When we stay the course, we will ultimately prevail -justice will be released.